
For the State Administration and Veterans' Affairs Interim Committee

Board Members:

The board consists of 20 members --11 voting members who must be confirmed by the senate, and 9 nonvoting ex officio members. The governor appoints 19 members. The tribal governments may appoint 1 member. Terms are 4-years and staggered. A board member may serve no more than 2 terms. Members are not compensated, except for travel, meals, and lodging expenses. The board must meet at least 3 times a year. The board hires its own staff, including an administrator, who serves as the board secretary and represents the board in all communications with the governor. (See Section 2-15-1205, MCA.)

Voting members:

- 5 regional representatives, must be honorably discharged veterans;
- 1 member at large, must be honorably discharged veteran;
- 1 tribal member, who must be an honorably discharged veteran; and
- 3 members with training, education, or experience related to veterans' issues, including but not limited to health and medical care, mental health care, chemical or drug dependency, homelessness, or job training and placement.

Nonvoting members:

- 1 representative of the office of state director of Indian affairs;
- 1 representative from the department of public health and human services;
- 1 representative of the United States department of veterans affairs;
- 1 representative of the veterans' employment and training service office in the United States department of labor;
- 1 representative of the state administration and veterans' affairs interim committee;
- 3 members, one representing each house and senate member of Montana's congressional delegation; and
- the director of the department of military affairs.

The tribal leaders of the eight tribal councils in Montana may appoint 1 voting member who is affiliated with a Montana tribe and is an honorably discharged veteran. If a tribal member is not appointed by the Montana tribal leaders, the governor shall choose this member by lot from a pool of names submitted by the eight tribal councils in the state, with each tribal council submitting one name.

Montana Veterans' Affairs Division (MVAD) Administrator:
Joseph Foster, 324-3741, jofoster@mt.gov.

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Responsibilities:

- Operate 10 statewide service offices: Belgrade, Billings, Butte, Great Falls, Havre, Helena, Kalispell, Lewistown, Miles City, and Missoula.
- Prepare and file benefit claims for veterans and their families.
- Represent veterans and their families in the claims and appeals process of the Federal Department of Veterans Affairs.
- Provide regularly scheduled veterans outreach services throughout the state.
- Advise veterans and their families on veterans benefits, and assist in obtaining legal and medical documentation to support claims.
- Obtain military service records and awards.
- Coordinate assistance with other veterans service organizations and government agencies.
- Educate, advise and assist the general public and government agencies on veterans affairs and issues.
- Administer, operate and maintain State Veterans Cemeteries in accordance with the National Cemetery Administration's National Shrine Standards.
- Receive donations for State Veterans Cemeteries.
- Represent the State of Montana as a member of the National Association of State Directors of Veterans Affairs.

(Source: <http://montanadma.org/functions>)

Optional duties listed in statute (section 10-2-102(1)(e), MCA):

- development and distribution of a services and benefits directory;
- regular public service announcements through various media;
- information to assist veterans and their family members in obtaining federal benefits and treatment services related to depleted uranium exposure
- an internet website with information and links relevant to veterans and their families and including information about board meetings and activities related to veterans' affairs; and
- a quarterly newsletter, which may be printed or electronically distributed by e-mail or by posting it to an appropriate website.

*Board of Veterans' Affairs
Agency Overview*

June 2013

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Programs, FTE, and Budgeted Funding - 2015 Biennium:

Programs	FTE FY 2014	General Fund	State Special	Federal Revenue	Proprietary	Other*	Total Funding	% of Total DMA Funds	% Generally Funded
Veteran's Affairs	29.00	2,131,326	2,161,584	0	0	0	4,292,910	4.89%	49.65%

Source: Legislative Fiscal Division

Advisory Councils

- None.

Most Recent Legislative Audits:

- Department of Military Affairs Financial-Compliance Audit for FY 2012, No. 12-25.

Board Bills During 2013 Session:

- No board bills request.

Committee Areas of Interest Previous Interim:

- No emerging issues.

Hot Topics of 2013 Session:

- Special benefits (see HJR 30 - study requested to inventory current benefits).
- Recognition of military training for civilian certification or licensing (see SJR 24 - interim study).

Statutorily Required Reports:

- Biennial report.

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